

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07

L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 AGRE-00 AID-05

/072 W

-----022544 210717Z /14

R 210555Z JUN 77

FM AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1882

INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMCONSUL MEDAN

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMCONSUL SURABAYA

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 JAKARTA 8139

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, ID

SUBJECT: WHAT NEXT FOR GOLKAR

1. SUMMARY. ALTHOUGH GENERALLY DISAPPOINTED BY THEIR ORGANIZATION'S SHOWING IN THE MAY 1977 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS, GOLKAR LEADERS ARE NOT AGREED ON POSSIBLE REMEDIES. THE YOUNGER GENERATION OF GOLKAR LEADERS INTERPRET THEIR POOR SHOWING IN JAKARTA AS A WARNING THAT GOLKAR NEEDS A NEW IMAGE WHICH WILL ASSOCIATE IT MORE WITH THE LITTLE PEOPLE AND LESS WITH THE GOVERNMENT BUREAUCRACY. SENIOR GOLKAR FIGURES, ON THE OTHER HAND, BLAME THE JAKARTA LOSS ON THE HANDS OFF ATTITUDE OF ITS GOVERNOR, ALI SADIKIN, AND POINT TO THE COUNT IN EAST JAVA AND OTHER PROVINCES AS PROOF THAT BUREAUCRATIC PATERNALISM STILL PAYS. POST-ELECTION CHANGES IN THE GOLKAR COURSE WILL IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS PROBABLY BE NO MORE DRAMATIC THAN THE 0.7 PERCENT DECLINE IN ITS SHARE OF THE VOTE. LEGISLATIVE PROPOSALS FOR
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LAND REFORM, NEW LABOR LEGISLATION AND REDUCED RESTRICTIONS ON THE PRESS WILL REFLECT THE YOUNGER GENERATION'S CONCERN WITH IMAGE WHILE THE OLDER GENERATION WILL CONCENTRATE ON CHOOSING GOLKAR STRONGMEN FOR GOVERNORS AND ON CIRCUMSCRIBING THE OPPOSITION'S ABILITY TO EXPLOIT RELIGIOUS SENTIMENT.
END SUMMARY.

2. WHEN MAKING A PRE-ELECTION PREDICTION THAT HIS ORGANIZATION WOULD GARNER 70 PERCENT OF THE MAY 1977 PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION VOTE, A HOUNGER GOLKAR STRATEGIST SAID ANYTHING SHORT OF THIS GOAL WOULD INDICATE THAT GOLKAR HAD UNDERESTIMATED THE DEGREE TO WHICH INDONESIA'S POPULATION WAS MOVING AWAY FROM PATERNALISTIC PATTERNS. GOLKAR'S SLIGHT DECLINE IN 1977 FROM ITS 62.8 PERCENT SHARE OF THE 1971 VOTE AND, MORE IMPORTANT, ITS OUTRIGHT DEFEAT IN JAKARTA HAS CONSEQUENTLY LED THIS AND OTHER YOUNG GOLKAR ADHERENTS TO QUESTION SERIOUSLY THEIR ORGANIZATION'S STRATEGY OF RELYING PRINCIPALLY ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT LEADERS TO BRING IN THE VOTE. IN CONVERSATIONS WITH TWO SUCH LEADERS, COSMAS BATUBARA AND HARRY TJAN, CITED AS THE COST OF THIS STRATEGY:

- A. AN IMAGE IN THE COUNTRYSIDE OF BEING OVERLY OFFICIAL AND SOMEWHAT THREATENING INSTEAD OF HUMANE AND HELPFUL;
- B. THE LOSS OF MANY VOTES AMONG THE REGIME'S OWN EDUCATED ELITE IN THE BUREAUCRACY AND IN THE MILITARY (THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THE PRESIDENT AND HIS CLOSEST MILITARY ADVISORS ARE ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT DESERTIONS FROM GOVERNMENT AND MILITARY RANKS);
- C. THE ALMOST TOTAL ABSENCE OF ACTIVE SUPPORT FROM STUDENTS IN THE MAJOR CITIES.

3. THE YOUNGER GOLKAR LEADERS DO NOT PROPOSE HARSH REMEDIES BUT RATHER A PUBLIC RELATIONS PROGRAM TO BUILD-UP GOLKAR'S CONFIDENTIAL

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IMAGE AS AN ORGANIZATION OF REFORMERS AS WELL AS OF GOVERNMENT ADMINISTRATORS. THEY SEE PARLIAMENTARY INITIATIVES AS A PRIME MEANS OF REACHING THIS OBJECTIVE AND THE GOLKAR FACTION LEADER IN PARLIAMENT ANNOUNCED ON MAY 27 THAT HIS ORGANIZATION WOULD PROPOSE 80 ITEMS FOR THE NEW PARLIAMENT'S AGENDA. AMONG THE PARLIAMENTARY AND EXTRA-PARLIAMENTARY ACTIONS PROPOSED BY GOLKAR LEADERS TO POLISH THE ORGANIZATION'S IMAGE ARE:

- A. A NEW LABOR LAW REGULATING JOB SECURITY AND LABOR SAFETY;
- B. LAND REFORM AND LAND USE PROGRAMS, DIRECTED PRIMARILY AT REGIONS OUTSIDE JAVA AND BALI;
- C. CHANGING THE BASIC PRESS LAW TO ELIMINATE THE REQUIREMENT FOR PUBLISHING PERMITS, A LONG-TIME GOAL OF THE INDONESIAN JOURNALISTS ASSOCIATION;
- D. APPOINTMENT OF DEPUTY MINISTERS IN EACH DEPARTMENT TO HANDLE PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRIES, WHICH NOW OFTEN GO UNATTENDED BECAUSE OF MINISTERS' HEAVY SCHEDULES;
- D. A POST-ELECTION DIALOGUE WITH THE STUDENT GENERATION;
- F. MORE NON-GOVERNMENT GOLKAR CADRES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL;
- G. A GREATER PROPORTION OF CIVILIANS IN GOLKAR LEADERSHIP POSITION (COSMOS BATUBARA TOLD US THAT CIVILIANS

WILL BE GIVEN HALF OF THE PROVINCIAL ORGANIZATION'S
POSITIONS AND ACTIVE DUTY MILITARY IN THE CENTRAL HEADQUARTERS
WILL BE GRADUALLY REPLACED BY RETIRED OFFICERS).

4. OLDER GOLKAR LEADERS, MOSTLY GENERALS, HAVE FOUND FAULT
WITH THE EXECUTION NOT THE CONCEPT OF THEIR ELECTORAL OPERA-
TION PLAN. GOLKAR GENERAL CHAIRMAN AIR MURTONO NOTED
THAT OF THE FOUR PRINCIPAL REGIONS "UNFAVORABLE" TO GOLKAR,
I.E., WHERE THE DEVOUT MOSLEMS COMPOSE THE MAJORITY, TWO,
EAST JAVA AND MALUKU, WITNESSED GOLKAR GAINS BECAUSE OF
"INTENSIVE WORK." INFORMATION MINISTER MASHURI FORTHRIGHTLY
ATTRIBUTED GOLKAR GAINS TO "TRADITIONAL PATERNALISM" IN
INDONESIA'S RURAL SOCIETY AS WELL AS TO GOLKAR'S SUPERIOR
ORGANIZATION AND FACILITIES. GOLKAR'S LOSSES WERE
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ATTRIBUTED:

A. TO JAKARTA GOVERNOR ALI SADIKIN'S "STAND-OFF" ATTITUDE
(WHICH THE YOUNGER GENERATION ALSO ACKNOWLEDGED AS AN IM-
PORTANT FACTOR). ONE HIGH LEVEL INTERIOR DEPARTMENT OFFICIAL
POINTED OUT TO US PRIVATELY THAT MOST OF JAKARTA'S
MASSES ARE AS RECEPTIVE TO THE GUIDANCE OF THEIR NEIGHBORHOOD
ASSOCIATIONS' CHAIRMEN, WHOSE SIGNATURES ARE REQUIRED
FOR A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT PAPERS, AS RURAL INHABITANTS
ARE TO THEIR VILLAGE CHIEFS, BUT THIS GUIDANCE WAS NOT
FORTHCOMING.

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USIA-06 COME-00 EB-07 LAB-04 SIL-01 AGRE-00 AID-05
/072 W

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 JAKARTA 8139

B. TO THE ABSENCE OF A FATHER FIGURE ON GOLKAR'S
JAKARTA LIST. THE PPP'S AND THE PDI'S CAPITAL CITY
LISTS WERE HEADED BY VERY WELL KNOWN "OLD TIMERS" WHILE
GOLKAR'S FEATURED A LITTLE KNOWN LABOR LEADER.
C. TO THE PPP'S ALMOST UNRESTRICTED EXPLOITATION OF
RELIGIOUS SENTIMENTS PARTICULARLY THROUGH THEIR KA'BAH
SYMBOL.

5. THE OLDER GENERATION'S PRESCRIPTION FOR THE NEXT
ELECTIONS FOLLOWS FROM THEIR DIAGNOSIS OF GOLKAR'S
ILLS:

A. MORE DEPENDABLE GOVERNORS. THE FIRST OF THE
NINE TWO-TERM GOVERNORS TO BE REPLACED WAS NOT
SURPRISINGLY ALI SADIKIN, AND GOLKAR'S IDEAL CRITERIA ARE
PERHAPS REFLECTED IN HIS SUCCESSOR, A JAVANESE ARMY
GENERAL WITH CLOSE PERSONAL LOYALTIES TO THE PRESIDENT.
B. CURBS ON PPP EXPLOITATION OF ISLAM. WHILE YOUNGER
GOLKAR LEADERS BELIEVE THERE IS NO WAY TO DEPRIVE THE PPP
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OF ITS KA'BAH SYMBOL, INTERIOR MINISTER AMIRMACHMUD PUBLICLY
INDICATED THAT THIS WOULD BE DONE. OTHER STEPS TO
CUT THE "FLOATING MASSES" FROM RELIGIOUS TIES
AT ELECTION TIME MIGHT BE TAKEN IN THE PEOPLE'S CONSULTATIVE
ASSEMBLY SESSION SCHEDULED FOR MARCH 1978, A KEY INTERIOR
MINISTRY OFFICIAL INDICATED TO US.

C. MORE EFFORTS TO LURE MOSLEMS INTO GOLKAR. GOLKAR
LEADERS ATTRIBUTE THEIR GOOD-SHOWING IN EAST JAVA TO THEIR
USE OF PROMINENT MOSLEM CANDIDATES (NINE OF THE 35 GOLKAR
CANDIDATES ELECTED FROM THAT PROVINCE WON PUBLIC PROMINENCE
IN MOSLEM ORGANIZATIONS). YOUNGER GOLKAR LEADERS BELIEVE,
HOWEVER, THAT PPP'S ENHANCED PROSPECTS WILL DIMINISH
GOLKAR'S APPEAL TO THE ISLAMIC SECTOR AND THAT MOVEMENT
TOWARDS AN ALL ENCOMPASSING ORGANIZATION MODELED ON
MEXICO'S PRI MUST AWAIT ANOTHER ELECTION.

6. THE DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE YOUNGER AND THE OLDER

GENERATIONS OF GOLKAR LEADERS SIMPLY REFLECT, AS MOST OF THEM RECOGNIZE, A BASIC DILEMMA FACING THE ORGANIZATION. THE LARGE MAJORITY OF VOTERS IN THE NEXT ELECTION WILL REMAIN UNSOPHISTICATED, PASSIVE TRADITIONALISTS BUT THE MEASURES USED TO ENSURE THEIR VOTES WILL RISK LOSING THOSE OF THE INCREASING NUMBER OF POLITICAL ACTIVISTS IN URBAN AREAS. SINCE THE LONG TERM TREND IS CLEARLY AWAY FROM PATERNALISM, THE YOUNGER GENERATION HAS REASON TO PRESS FOR A NEW STRATEGY.. THEY MAY HAVE LITTLE ROOM TO MANEUVER WITHIN THE ORGANIZATION AND PERHAPS WITHIN PARLIAMENT, HOWEVER SINCE GOLKAR'S CURRENT CHAIRMAN, GENERAL AMIR MURTONO, HAS INDICATED THAT HE WISHES TO RETAIN HIS GOLKAR HAT WHILE PUTTING ON THAT OF CHAIRMAN OF PARLIAMENT. IF MOVES TO IMPROVE GOLKAR'S APPEAL TO THE POLITICALLY AWARE ARE TO PROCEED BEYOND THE COSMETIC, THE YOUNG LEADERS WILL NEED THEREFORE TO ENLIST AT LEAST THE PASSIVE SUPPORT OF SENIOR GOLKAR LEADERS LIKE MURTONO
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AND GENERAL ALI MURTOPO AS WELL AS CONTRIBUTIONS FROM KEY MINISTERIAL AND DEFENSE DEPARTMENT FIGURES. THE OUTCOME MAY BE A DUAL AND SOMEWHAT INCONSISTENT STRATEGY: LIBERAL PROPOSALS IN PARLIAMENT TO BENEFIT LABOR, THE PEASANTRY AND PERHAPS THE PRESS ACCOMPANIED BY A TIGHTENING OF GOLKAR DISCIPLINE WITHIN THE REGIONAL BUREAUCRACY AND CURBS ON POLITICAL EXPLOITATION OF ISLAM.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL PARTIES, PARTY ORGANIZATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 21-Jun-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977JAKARTA08139
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770220-1018
Format: TEL
From: JAKARTA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770636/aaaabfna.tel
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Litigation History:
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Office: ACTION EA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 5
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2085533
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Status: NATIVE
Subject: WHAT NEXT FOR GOLKAR
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To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odhc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/92546479-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009